

## **Fuck Boy**

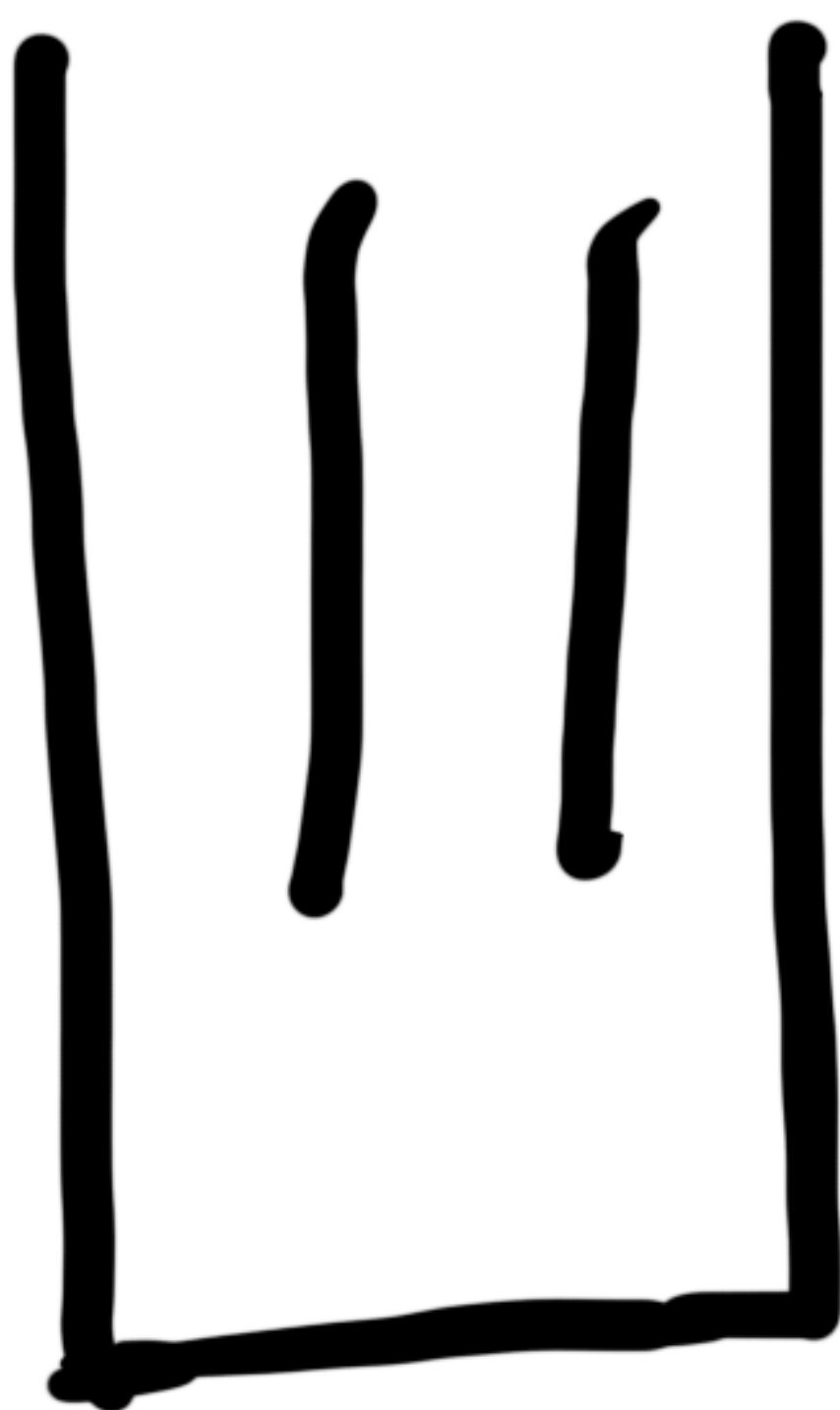
Why do you keep coming back?  
It's beyond comprehension.  
Sprawled out  
massive mattress  
dim lamplight  
flowing curves.

Harsh jokes, seeing others  
shouldn't you have stopped  
coming months ago?

Lying here,  
in feckless arms,  
both waiting  
for the other to change.

It's not the way you wanted,  
it's not an exclusive love  
fits and starts, other women  
and I repeat: "I can't control  
my wanton lust."

You're right,  
I could  
but I won't,  
I'm pleased  
with a massive mattress dim lamplight  
flowing curves.  
Why do you keep coming back?



## Charizard by Faulkner

*“I am in the middle of carrying a ‘League of Legends’ game, about to close it out, and my braless wife brings me a sandwich (not asked for) with chips as I get a double kill bot lane. So how is your day going?”*

*- Ninja*

sigmaJordan watched the final seconds of the online auction tick away. Variety Streamer of the Year (two years running) held steady his full-being, not just the body sitting comfortably upon his officially licensed Panda Global gaming chair, spoils of a rigged streamer-only Among Us tournament, the more important parts were being constrained with every ounce of effort he could muster: the soul, the mind, and the ego all needed to be held, for if they were let go for even a moment, he might send a higher bid reeling through the black depths of wherever the internet stored itself a little too early, giving time for a counter bid;

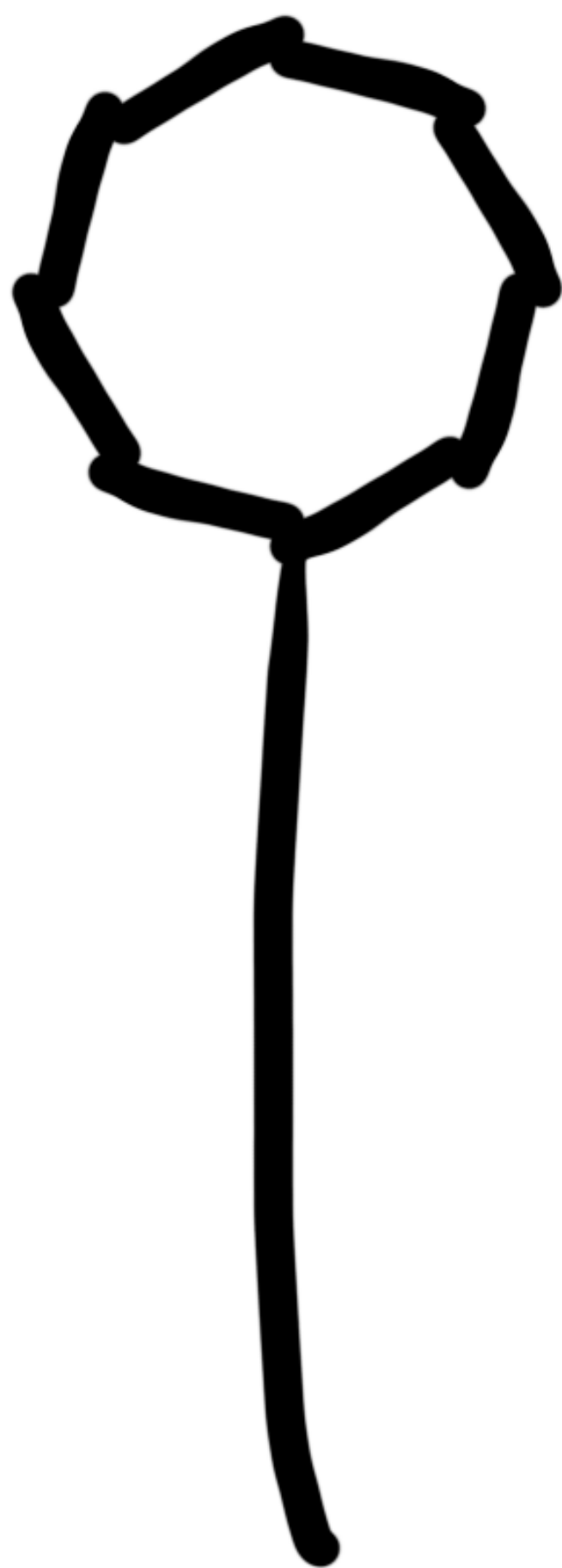
no, he held steady and waited for the clock to hit three, long enough to send the signal but not long enough for another to jump in with a final bid: \$420,000. Price wasn't the issue, he had set aside his earnings, his hours upon hours in front of a keyboard and mouse, not clicking, not typing, performing; squealing and whining in front of the little green light that came on his C920 webcam, the sinister circle capturing every movement, every second of his now immortalized life, the image so sharp as to pick up every rustle and wrinkle in the ironically tagged sweatshirt of the day (exclusively available as merch from his website), so crisp as to almost exude the smell of the Redbull being advertised behind him in a mini refrigerator, perhaps even so strong as to pick up the little bit of vodka mixed in, only at the end of the day of course, just for that last hour, maybe two hours, of the stream; spirits being his little helper, but because of that light always being “on” money was not the issue at play here, rather he just wanted it so badly; wanted it in a way he had wanted few other things in his life.

Money wasn't the issue;

the memory of Maggie and himself during recess playing upon wood chippings in the open air drove this desire.

Neither of them, pristine at six years old, were aware of the fences that surrounded all sides of their elementary school's playground: over there through the woods, over there across the dead-end road that led only to the school, over there past the bus-ramp unnecessarily protecting them from the neighborhood dogs- golden retrievers, and labradors, or well trained mutts that the poorer families said were rescues- not aware of those restriction but certainly affected by them because when he and the girl, Maggie, the sweet pink angel who held his head in her lap and sang “You are my sunshine” as they were hypnotized by the back and forth of the swings, there was a serenity only attributable from naivety. In his hands he moved the holographic card too and fro, dazzling them both as the sun sparkled off of the drawn flames. He pretended to read the rules of a game he never played, nor understood, but was smart enough to understand that the higher numbers must be a good thing, and this card said 100, which was the highest number

he was aware of, so he knew it was good. The memory darkens, the sky clouds over as the boy Jordan had not prepared for, the boy who came from beyond those multi-layered suburban fences that had kept Jordan safe from the outside for so long, the boy who could also recognize what was good but was not bound to act in accordance of it, the boy who wasn't glamoured by drawn flame; that boy recognized young Jordan's card by it's name and value rather than its goodness; that boy recognized Charizard. Broadcasting simultaneously to 200,000 anonymous faces, he clasped the shoulder wings of the gaming chair with the force of his very soul in his hands. This was not about the price! It was about the ghost of that boy, who so confidently took so much from him all those years ago. Jordan could never have known, could never have guessed, that the boy from beyond those fences was capable of making an unfair offer. What experience could he have had to know that? Everything within that fence, up until that cloudy recess, had been fair or swiftly overturned by a roving teacher. Maggie, a canary in the coal-mine, knew





something was wrong, her darling sunshine was about to be swindled but she could not express how clearly to Jordan.

After all, what the fenceless boy offered was in an even less intelligible language (not yet was Jordan of an

understanding of the world wide enough to identify

Japanese), plus it was a Digimon card, the numbers were

different, much higher than his Charizard's, he had never

seen numbers so high, it must have been stronger, it must

be, all-importantly, good. Fair. He held out his card. The

fenceless boy snatched it from his grip. The fenceless boy

dropped his card onto Jordan. The fenceless boy

disappeared before Jordan looked up from his new

possession. Twenty-five years later, he still regretted that

decision, glued to his gaming chair, with over \$420,000 on

the line, a horde of distant onlookers blowing up the chat

too quickly for anyone to possibly read as they made inane

comments about a plant related to a number. And the time

ticked down, 10 seconds of dead air, a failure on

sigmaJordan's end, he knew better, he knew better but the

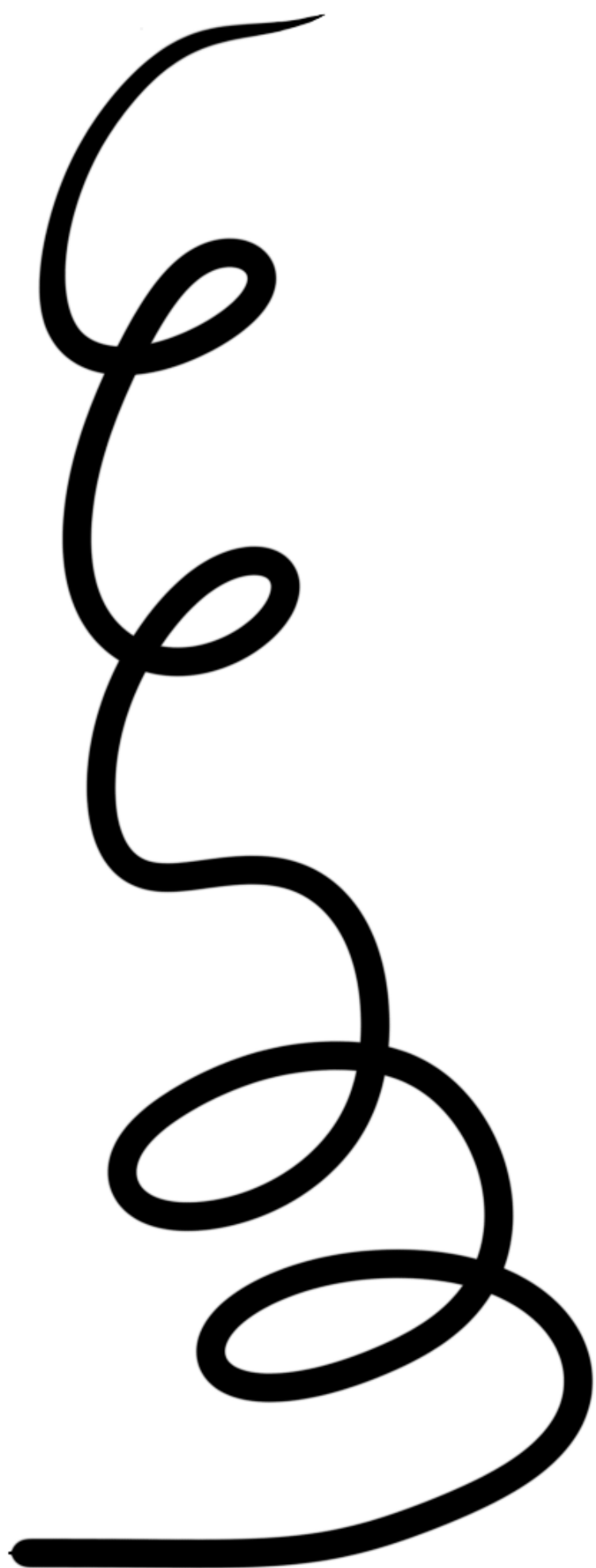
number had bought him some time, and the dead air seemed

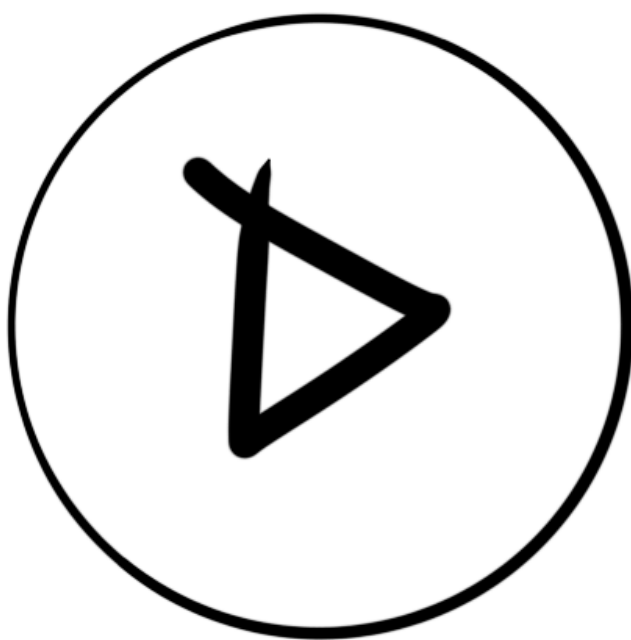
less important; he still had that Digimon card; somewhere in a box in his parents' attic he still had that common Digimon card. Kunemon.

He thought of that fenceless boy often, nameless and faceless, always -less, with the singular wretched deed to attach to his name. sigmaJordan, as he had done many times before, played out the rest of the fenceless boy's sorry life in his imagination: he was decidedly a monster in the classroom, he ripped and tore through teachers' very souls-accumulating letters to his parents (never read) and happily served suspensions. On the first day of high-school, homeroom, he met eyes with an unlucky runt sitting next to him and unleashed that great skill, that only skill, perhaps, of deducing, just as he had done when he looked at Jordan, innocent Jordan and his fiery Charizard, from the eyes alone: this was a mark, this was a weak link in the chain. Far from taking his lunch money, or his Charizard, now the move was deeper, the move was louder, "What are you looking at you fucking faggot? Are you trying to fuck me?" The runt stammered something, it didn't matter what,

it mattered that he stammered, before he knew it the fenceless boy was on top of him, punching, scratching, yelling “faggot” at the top of his lungs until the homeroom teacher pulled him off, until the two were in the administrators office, until the fenceless boy, now the chad of 9th grade, had landed himself on a list from the very first day of high school, served a month in juvenile detention by the end of 10th grade , natted inside- producing a child by the Christmas of junior year, and ultimately failed to complete senior year to absolutely no one's surprise.

Watching as the final seconds of the auction ticked away, sigmaJordan left his reverie and lifted his hand, theatrically held far enough over the keyboard so that his fans would catch it, his breath held theatrically hard so that his fans would do all of the talking in the chat, he smashed that button, won the auction, and had defeated, finally, finally, finally, the Chad of 9<sup>th</sup> Grade. The Fenceless Boy. Abruptly, three hours ahead of schedule, sigmaJordan turned off the green light. Jordan laid back in his gamer chair. He wept.





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